

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant notes the objection to the disclosure and has amended both pages 5 and 6.

Page 5 notes that the shaft ends “may have” spline. Both the original specification language and this amended specification language indicate that spline is not a required form, but that the preferred embodiment may include that. That is a typical way of reciting this in a specification.

The objection to language in the remaining claims is noted. It is submitted that all of the comments in the Office Action concerning claim language have been addressed by minor amendments to the claims, which have no effect on their substance or their scope, but merely improve their form.

As to claim 13, each shoulder has a hole, but when the several holes in claim 13 refer to the holes in the shoulders of adjacent segments, without language inconsistency.

Claim 18 has been amended to eliminate the part thereof that might be redundant.

Claims 13, 14, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102. With the amendment of claim 13 to include the element of claim 16, such that claim 13 is now claim 16 in independent form, the rejection of original unamended claim 13 has been rendered moot.

Claims 14, 17 and 18 are dependent upon the amended version of claim 13 and their allowability is dependent upon the allowability of that claim, dealt with under the next ground of rejection.

The method of amended claim 13 concerns assembling a drum constituting an axle, and the method also concerns shaft ends mounted on a plate at the ends of the drum. Claim 13 as amended recites a step of applying a plate with a respective shaft end projecting outwardly therefrom at each opposite axial end of the drum. Nothing comparable is suggested in Belanger. That plate with a shaft end and the attachment thereof to the drum end distinguishes the method of claim 16 from whatever might be gleaned from the disclosure of Belanger.

Claims 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over the patent to Belanger. Claim 15 is dependent upon amended claim 13. Claim 16 is included in amended claim 13,

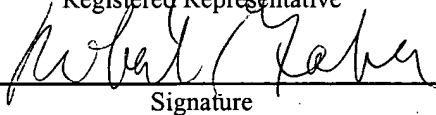
whereby the rejection is discussed in connection with now amended claim 13 that replaced claim 16.

Accordingly, allowance of claim 13, which replaces claim 16, and claims 14, 16, 17 and 18, as amended, is requested.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on March 3, 2004:

Robert C. Faber

Name of applicant, assignee or
Registered Representative

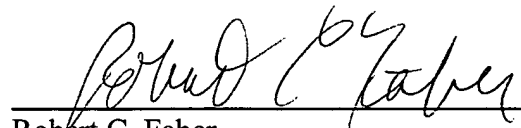


Signature

March 3, 2004

Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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